

FALL 2007 ISSUE NO. 81

BENTRIM BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHIGAN MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION



MICHIGAN MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION

**Want To Join The
National Mountain
Bike Patrol?
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**Meet Our New
Executive Director
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KONA HEI HEI SUPREME

NOW WITH MAGNESIUM ROCKERS AND INCREASED STANDOVER
EVERY PART IS PICKED TO KEEP THE WEIGHT DOWN, THEN WE LIMIT
THE REAR SUSPENSION TO 2.5 INCHES AND APPLY JUST A LITTLE BIT
OF PAINT ON THE SUPERLIGHT SCANDIUM FRAME TUBES

KONA LES GETS FACTORY RIDERS RYAN TREBON AND BARRY WICKS HAVE
COMBINED FOR 3 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS

KONAWORLD.COM

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RACE IN HAWAIIAN



The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. We have 1,600 members in nine chapters throughout Michigan. The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users. The Bent Rim Bugle is published four times a year (March, June, Sept, Dec.) by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and distributed to all members. It is made possible by volunteers and riders like you.

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Visit the MMBA on the web at:
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BRB Information

The Bent Rim Bugle (BRB) began over 15 years ago. Back then, the Michigan DNR was on the verge of closing all state land to mountain bikes. The BRB was the means for organizing the state's off road cyclists to work for continued access.

Today the BRB still carries the torch for off road advocacy, it has become the official newsletter of the MMBA. Published quarterly, the BRB keeps the MMBA membership up to date on what's happening throughout the State.

Contributing articles, artwork, and photos
If it's about mountain biking, please send it in. Electronic submissions should go to brb@mmba.org. We prefer documents in Microsoft Word, or simple text. Photos should be in jpg format and at least 300 dpi. We can't promise everything will get published, but we'll do our best. For more information on how to submit contact brb@mmba.org

Advertise in the BRB

The Bent Rim Bugle offers inexpensive and targeted advertising which helps with the cost of producing this cool newsletter.

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Contact us at brb@mmba.org for more info and ad rates.

Additional Copies

Additional copies of the BRB can be purchased for \$3.00 each, based on availability. Contact brb@mmba.org.

August 2007 Membership Report

Chapter	Current Memberships	Change Since Last Issue	Change Since One Year Ago	
Holly/Flint	79	-8	-10%	-28 -36%
Metro North	275	-30	-11%	
Metro South	343	-35	-10%	
Mid-State	90	-5	-5%	10 12%
Northeast	31	-1	-3%	4 14%
Northern	68	-3	-5%	9 13%
Potawatomi	254	-16	-6%	-2 -1%
Southwest	130	-4	-3%	20 15%
Western	191	-2	-1%	32 17%
Total	1506	-103	-7%	51 3%

Cover: Adam Klaar patrols at Pontiac Lake Recreation Area

Cover photo by: Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

From the President

By Bill Mayer

Summer is drawing to a close and new trail construction season is upon us. Fall is the perfect time of year with the leaves off the trees to scope the lay of the land and look for the perfect places for re-routes and new trail. With that in mind, pay close attention to our website and look for the best type of traildays, the ones where new trail is cut.

I seem to regularly find myself in the position of explaining to non-MMBA mountain bikers that it is volunteers like you and me that keep our Michigan trails in excellent shape. All too often it is assumed that some mystical Park task force does the work, or it is simply never given any thought. The reality is that the MMBA is its members, and why our trails are so great. If you have never had the amazing experience of putting hours of sweat labor into your favorite trail and then reaping the ride that comes afterwards you are missing out. The best trails are the ones that you helped build, so I encourage you to try and make at least one workday this fall. You won't be disappointed.

I am happy to announce that the MMBA has hired a new Executive director. After an extensive interview process of two very qualified candidates, we are happy to welcome Marne Smiley as our new ED. She has an outstanding background in marketing and communications, as well as being an excellent mountain biker. Look for many great things to be forthcoming now that we have her in this key role.

REI has and continues to be a huge supporter of the MMBA. Most recently they awarded us a grant in the amount of \$4,500 to support our Trail School program. The program is important because it provides a consistent level of training to our Trail Coordinators, Land Managers and volunteers in sustainable trail design. The grant will allow us to replenish our supply of course materials, tools and equipment. Do you want to take your trail building knowledge to the next level? Keep your eye on the MMBA website calendar for upcoming trail school events.

Furthermore, do you know who is the MMBA Trail Coordinator at your favorite local trail? If not, I strongly encourage you to visit the Trail Guide section of the MMBA website and find out. Being a TC is a time consuming and often thankless job. Let your TC know that you appreciate the work they are doing, and maybe even offer to lend a hand. It doesn't have to be at an organized trail day, even taking a walk with some loppers will greatly help everyone who uses the trail. And it adds up quickly as more people lend a hand whenever they can.

So, as the temperatures cool and the leaves come down get out and enjoy our trails. And maybe even make them better.



Meet Marne Smiley, Our New Executive Director

Meet Marne Smiley, the newly appointed Executive Director of the Michigan Mountain Biking Association. She has been involved in biking for over four years.

She brings her knowledge of being a part in the bike world on many levels, from working in a bike shop, to racing, to working at Michigan's largest sports publication, Michigan Sports & Fitness Magazine.

Marne came to love biking while nursing a running/rugby injury and hasn't looked back since. She has combined her running background finding her niche in Xterras. She looks forward to not only building and maintaining trails but to building and maintaining relationships with the other user groups and trail managers.

The CPS Needs



As you all know – the MMBA is a volunteer based organization. We rely

heavily on our own folks to help maintain, develop and improve our various functional areas. The Championship Point Series (CPS) is Michigan's premier grassroots racing series. The CPS helps raise funds to directly support ongoing MMBA advocacy work and trail improvements.

Here's Where We Need Your Help:
Each area below can use a separate (or

multiple) volunteer(s). If you have an interest – let us know!

Sponsorship – our current sponsorship guru is retiring from the job after many years. The areas of responsibility are:

- Maintaining existing relationships with current sponsors. We need to make sure that we keep them happy.
- Developing new relationships with potential sponsors. This includes looking for new sponsors, making sure that the individual sponsorship deals are in line with the MMBA vision and support our cause.
- Race season execution. We need to make sure that both parties execute on their portion of the agreement. Who is a good fit for this position? Any

one who loves to ride, has energy and enthusiasm!

Race Committee – we need a few good men and women to help us organize, grow and promote the annual CPS series. Most of the work involved is schedule development, point series tabulation, promoter relationship management and general administration of the CPS.

Each Chapter has a CPS rep – but you don't have to be a CPS rep to get involved.

How To Get Involved:

Send an email to cps@mmba.org or private message Cris Cataldo on the MMBA Bulletin Board. We'd love to hear from you!

MMBA on WCSX

By Joe Foy

This past July, we (MMBA) joined with Classic Rock WCSX, The JJ & Lynne Morning Show , Trek and American Cycle & Fitness in an on air contest where listeners would call in and answer trivia questions and the winner for that day would win a new Trek mountain bike, supplied by A.C & Fitness. But they would also win an official MMBA "Frazz" jersey supplied by the MMBA.

This contest went on for 10 days and the MMBA was mentioned everyday during the contest plus we had a link on the WCSX website for the length of the contest, plus we did an on air interview explaining who we are and what we do, so I'm sure we got some great publicity. Next year we hope to do this again with WCSX and another bike shop. We would like to thank WCSX, JJ & Lynne, Trek and American Cycle & Fitness for all the great support.

Maybury State Park Winter MTB Ban Lifted

By Joe Foy

We would like to give big amounts of gratitude for all the hard work that the T.C's, Dave Poirie & Mike Flack have put in to work with the DNR at Maybury State Park. All their joined hard work came to harvest this past month when the winter MTB riding ban was lifted at the park. Here's what Mike Flack posted on the MMBA Board about it...

"We got the official word yesterday from Thomas Bissett (land manager at Maybury State Park). For 2007-2008 winter season we'll run the entire trail as a larger scale test season.

The official approval came from George Cameron and Luba Sitar after reviewing Mr. Bissett's thorough review of the test winter loop from 2006-2007 winter season.

The report provided by Thomas Bissett covered items such as

- 1.) Trail connections/enhanced opportunity

- 2.) Public perception
- 3.) Visual quality
- 4.) Fiscal impact to the park
- 5.) Drainage characteristics
- 6.) Safety hazards/maintenance
- 7.) Ability to stabilize trail degradation
- 8.) Ability to promote trail regeneration

The report also included several photos taken during the test period of several areas to watch or repair. The report also included some detailed weather reports and conditions reporting.

The report ends with the recommendation that the entire trail remain open for the coming season as a larger test. the opening of the entire trail will then be re-evaluated next spring just as this test loop was. And this opening of the entire trail is contingent on 3 items

- 1.) Reclaim the very old closed sections of trail with the aid of the MMBA
- 2.) Evaluate the drainage issues photographed and listed and the DNR/MMBA will work to come up with sustainable solutions
- 3.) The MMBA agrees to restrict voluntarism during the months when DNR park staff is laid off.

So lets get out there this winter and enjoy the trails..."

Again, Excellent Job Guys!!!

Bike Ban Looms Over Iconic Continental Divide Trail

Mountain bikers may find some of the nation's best single-track off-limits if the Forest Service pushes through with a new directive. The agency wants to limit or prohibit bike access on the Continental Divide Trail (CDT), which runs the length of the country, from Montana to New Mexico.

The CDT includes the famous Monarch Crest, many sections of the Colorado Trail, well-known Steamboat Springs single-track, important trails around Butte and Helena and much, much more.

Take Action

Your strong voice is essential to saving epic rides along the CDT. The Forest Service's proposal to restrict and prohibit mountain biking has been warmly embraced by some anti-bike groups, who are giving it their full support. All mountain bikers are urged to take action:

File Comments

Formally file your comments with the Forest Service. IMBA's simple form takes seconds and will submit your official comments. The deadline is October 12.

Spread the Word

Rally your friends and ask them to echo your support for bike access on this outstanding trail. We need thousands of comments to hold out hope for continued access, so please forward this to your riding friends across the country.

Help Maintain the CDT

If you live or play near the CDT, consider organizing or attending trailwork days to help build and maintain this magnificent trail. Learn about volunteer opportunities near you.

Donate

Can you imagine losing our longest shared-use trail? The IMBA Legal Fund needs your financial support.

Additional Information

Why is the Forest Service revising its management directive? The CDT is currently managed under guidelines from an outdated p;1985 Comprehensive Plan and the agency believes it's time to update that document by clearing up any ambiguity regarding the purpose of the trail and its allowed uses. As part of this effort, the Forest Service is focusing on a hiking and horse-centric vision.

The CDT is a 3,100-mile shared-use route from Canada to Mexico, traversing some of the most scenic high-elevation terrain in the country. Mountain biking is permitted in most non-Wilderness areas and has occurred on some sections for

25 years. According to the Continental Divide Trail Alliance (CDTA), the trail is only 70 percent completed, with many existing miles in desperate need of repair and maintenance. CDTA estimates the cost to complete the CDT at \$27 million.

IMBA believes a shared-use philosophy that includes bicycling is compatible with the intent and purpose of the CDT, and that mountain bikers can help overcome these significant hurdles impeding the trail's completion. With 40 million participants, mountain biking is the second most popular trail activity in the country (Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2007). This large constituency helps lobby for public lands funding and donates nearly one million volunteer hours each year to trail construction and maintenance. Mountain bikers can be valuable partners for the CDT.

Among long-distance trails, the CDT is unique in that has generally allowed mountain biking. Unlike the Pacific Crest Trail or Appalachian Trail, mountain bikes are largely welcome on non-Wilderness sections of the CDT. IMBA isn't asking for access to all 3,100 miles, but there are many non-Wilderness sections where non-motorized users can get along and mountain biking should continue.

The Forest Service has said it believes Congress intended the CDT to be for hiking and horse use only. Unfortunately, the agency is basing its proposed directive on a 1976 Study Report - written before modern mountain biking was established-and a similarly out-dated Comprehensive Plan of 1985. Not surprisingly, both documents focus primarily on providing experiences for the "hiker and horseman." But neither suggests the trail should be limited to these two uses, and in many instances encourages non-motorized activities.

In fact, the 1976 CDT Study Report states, "The primary purpose of this trail (CDT) is to provide a continuous, appealing trail route, designed for the hiker and horseman, but *compatible with other land uses*" (italics added).

In 1983, Congress amended the National Trails Act to clarify potentially acceptable uses on the CDT and other National Scenic Trails. Bicycling is listed alongside various forms of hiking, backpacking and horse use (16 USC 1246(j)).

This congressional statute is clear and should supercede internal agency documents. IMBA does not believe bicycling should be discouraged or prohibited on the CDT. More than two decades of bicycling on the CDT has shown that this activity does not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail and that all users can get along.

Today, the environmental and social science of trail recreation is better developed and many backcountry trails are shared by hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers. A growing scientific consensus has shown that impacts of mountain biking are similar to hiking and less than horse or OHV use (Marion and Wimpey, 2007).

The IMBA / Forest Service Memorandum of Understanding

states mountain bicycling should be managed distinctly from motorized travel. It also says mountain bicycling is appropriate in areas listed as "primitive" on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. These areas comprise a significant percentage of the CDNST.

Proposed Forest Service Directive Language on Mountain Biking

The proposed directive contains the following sections that discourage our quiet, low-impact, human-powered activity:

7. Bicycle (mountain bike) use may only be allowed on a trail segment of the CDNST where the following conditions are met (16 U.S.C. 1246(c)):

a. An affirmative determination has been made that bicycle use would not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the CDNST, and

b. Bicycles must also be allowed by the overall management direction for the land management plan area.

8. Where bicycle (mountain bike) use is allowed on the CDNST, consider establishing bicycle use prohibitions and restrictions (36 CFR part 261) to mitigate the effects of such use on the nature and purposes of the CDNST. Management practices and actions that would promote or result in increased bicycle use on the CDNST should not occur. (72 FR 32276)

If you have any additional questions regarding the directive, please email IMBA's Advocacy Team
drew@imba.com.

Mailing Your Comments

If you would rather write your own letter of support for continued shared-use management on the CDT, please use the following address:

Greg Warren, CDNST Administrator
P.O. Box 25127
Lakewood, CO 80225-0127

Or via email:
cdnst@fs.fed.us

The Importance of Elected Officials

Every comment counts and the support of tow councils, county commissioners, tourism and parks boards and other elected officials is extremely important.

Please consider asking your representatives, both local and national, to support equal treatment of mountain biking on the CDT.



Senator Michele McManus (R-Lake Leelanau), pictured with former MMBA Executive Director, Todd Scott, receives the MMBA Legislator of the Year award for 2006. The Senator is a strong supporter of Michigan bicyclists and sponsored legislation that improved our state bicycle laws. She also sponsored the bill which extended the DNR's ability to sell motor vehicle passes, which generate one-third of the parks budget. If you're ever in the Lansing area, make sure to stop by her offices (ground floor of the Capitol building) and thank her for her efforts to make Michigan a great place to bike.



Photo by Joseph Elden

Congratulations to Alex Lanstra- the winner of the third Gary Fisher bike courtesy of Gary Fisher Bikes and the MMBA-CPS. Here Scott Silvers awards Alex his certificate to pick up his free bike!

Summer Solstice Sortie 2007

By TJ Hill, bicycle aficionado

The 2007 version of the Summer Solstice Sortie was held on Saturday June 23rd. The weather was ideal for a ride of significant distance. At start time, 8:15 Am it was 61 degrees. The high for the day was 78 degrees and thus we were not cooked during the ride.

We had a two pack, Phil Saoud and TJ Hill. Fortunately that is all I require in the way of a pack to have a really good ride. Since I am the navigator I get to decide on the route. I decided to use the Ortonville, Metamora route for the first half of the ride rather than the Columbiaville route that I have used for most of the previous SSS rides.

We started from Stony Creek West Branch Lot B and headed west on the trail to the Sheldon Road hole in the fence. We then made our way to Lake Orion via mostly dirt roads. From that point we crossed Heights, Joslyn and Indianwood until we were back on dirt at Neuman Road. From this point we head west and south till we reach Ratalee Lake Road and Ellis Road. We then do stair steps north and west till we reach Bird that we follow to Grange Hall then Wolf where we head east to M-15 in the City of Ortonville.

After crossing M-15 we headed north and east on South, Mill, Church and Oakwood to Sands Road where we head north as we return to dirt. At Sawmill Lk we head east to Honert then north to Fox Lake where we turn left

and begin the very arduous climb up the three stage hill whose pitch reaches above 25%. Along with the grade the road was covered with loose stones and big rocks. Needless to say this was a granny gear climb. The descent is no picnic as the surface has a variety of sand, rocks and ruts. Fortunately the pitch on the west slope is more in the 12% category. This for a good descender would be a ball but for us old guys a good deal of intermittent braking was necessary.

When we reached Tody Road we went right, north then west after which the road intersected Washburn. We headed south on Washburn, the Genesee County Line. At Fox Lake we turned left, east then began a long climb on a regular gravel road. After a half mile the one lane rutted road returns as we descend

Bent Rim Bugle,

Attached are chronicles of 2 recent Saturday rides. They both began at Stony Creek West Branch Lot B.

I have been a Wolverine since 1947 however since about 1990 I have been a Mountain Bike Supertourist. I have convinced very few Wolverines to follow my lead onto dirt roads and dirt trails.

TJ Hill

to the area that used to be impassable for motor vehicles with wheels smaller than a road grader. Somehow in recent years this section has become fairly tame.

After passing Tody the climb begins and is longer than the westbound climb but only half as steep. We reached the summit then descended the really steep section that we both negotiated successfully, much to our relief. After about a half mile we pulled into the horse camp where we went to the pump for some face washing as well as water ingesting. It was a short stop before we continued east to Hadley Road that we crossed after which the road was Big Fish Lake road. This section has one steep downhill right curve where you

need to brake early to avoid being thrown across the road to the left.

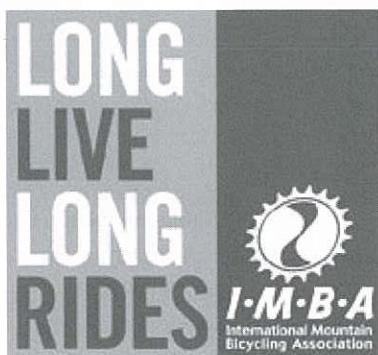
Big Fish Lake is no picnic what with its hills and curves as it jiggles south and east until it tees into Connell. At that point we turn left and go a short distance to the next curve to the east where the road becomes Davison Lake Road. A short time later we turn left onto Sinroll that we follow to its end where there is an RV track with its own set of challenges from deep ruts to pools of stagnant water as well as steep hills and plenty of mud. I must confess that there was less mud and smaller pools of water than there has been in the past, nonetheless it was tough enough to negotiate.

At the north end of the trail the road becomes Deihl on which we continue north to Brocker then go right for a quarter mile then pick up Deihl again. We head north for 3 miles to Crampton where we turn right, east. After about 3/4ths of a mile we pass by the model train complex. A train had just passed before we arrived. We turned in but only saw the rear end as it headed off to the north over the 6 miles of track that this train aficionado has on his property.

We continued east to Herd then went north as we passed the Metamora Recreation Area. At Richie we went right, east to Baldwin then right, south toward Caley. I checked my odometer before reaching Caley and told Phil we needed to continue sout to pick up more mileage so that we would have at least 60 miles when we reached the lunch stop. So we passed Caley and continued south about a mile then found a cottage road heading west. We followed it to its end then backtracked. I felt we were still short so we went south for another half mile before doing a U turn and headed north to Caley then east to M-24 Lapeer road. We crossed over and went north past Dryden Road to the Sun Dance Restaurant where we arrived with 60.3 miles covered.

We had the usual lunch, Veggie scrambled with wheat toast. During lunch I likely drank 20 ounces of water. With

(Continued on page 21)



Try Cyclo-Cross

By Jay Moncel

What is Cyclo-Cross? Sometimes also seen as Cyclocross, CX, Cyclo-X or 'Cross is a form of bicycle racing typically in the autumn and winter. It consists of many laps within a short 2-3 km or 1-2 mile course. Courses feature pavement, wooded trails, grass, steep hills and obstacles requiring the rider to quickly dismount, carry the bike and navigate the obstruction and remount in one graceful motion. Races are broken out into 3 different categories and are generally between 30 minutes to an hour in length.

Cyclo-cross began in Europe as most cycling did. In the early 1900's the sport began to spread throughout neighboring countries and in 1902 the first national championship was held in France. Belgium was next in 1910 then Switzerland, Luxembourg, Spain and Italy. Belgium has since dominated the sport and is currently the Big House for Cyclo-cross. Its common to experience a week day world cup cyclo-cross race with 15,000 in attendance. The sport is simply a part of the lifestyle.

The bicycles used in cyclo-cross are unique. They roughly resemble altered road bikes. In a way this is true, however most modern cyclo-cross bikes are made specifically for this style of the sport. The major differences between road bikes and cyclo-cross bikes are that cyclo-cross frames have wider clearances, knobby tires, cantilever brakes and lower gears. The purpose for these alterations with these frames is to assure mud clearance during bad conditions. Most cyclo-cross races are held among the worst of natures elements. Good traction and mud shed is key to driving momentum.

Clothing used in cyclo-cross racing is similar to road racing. However since cyclo-cross is a cold weather sport there is an emphasis toward warmer clothing. Most cyclo-crossers prefer skin-suits for maximizing the freedom of movement. This is extremely important for the cyclo-crosser. During the challenge the rider is moving the body more than a typical bike racer. Dismount and remount, jumping obstacles, and navigating sharp corners.



Team Sandbag's Curt Potocki clears a barrier

Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

In the situation where a rider has to shoulder the bike, the skin-suit provides a smooth glide for the bike frame along the arms and back and prevents the jersey from snagging during the motion. Mountain bike shoes are also adopted as courses force competitors to run through tricky sections of the course.

Cyclo-cross race courses almost universally consist of many laps over a short course ending when a time limit is reached rather than a specific number of laps are achieved or certain distance. Generally each lap is around 2.5 – 3.5 km and is 90% rideable. Official cyclo-cross races are run under UCI (United Cyclists International) rules and must follow these rules closely to be official. Most cyclo-crossers are provided with a variety of terrain during an event. Slight elevation changes, sand pits, hurdles, steps, off camber hills, mud, snow, wood chips and pavement are all types of terrain a cyclo-crosser must expect during a challenge. Handling skills are a must since these challenges can be dangerous.

Cyclo-cross is a growing sport with a lot of momentum in the States. Bike dealers have embraced the sport with open arms since the selling season is extended into the fall and early winter. Local races have swelled in size and more people are looking for a way to carry fitness into the off season. Cyclo-cross is a great way to condition for skiing and other winter activities. More importantly it helps cyclists hold their fitness into the spring for the easy season transition.

You can get involved locally with Cyclo-cross by visiting the local racing series at www.tailwind.net. You can also attend a nationally recognized event at one of six stops in the US at a US National Grand Prix event www.usgpcyclocross.com. For practice and tips on how to learn the basics of Cyclo-cross techniques visit www.cycle-smart.com and order the *Solutions for Cyclo-Cross DVD*. You'll be glad you did. See you at the races.

The Ride That Changed My Life

H. David Haddock

This is the story of what happened to a fellow mountain biker and how it changed my life. I wrote this Sunday evening after the incident and wanted to share it with all my fellow riders at MMBA but was torn between what could seem like tooting my own horn and what ever value it might offer. I am now at the point where it has been long enough that I would like to share the details with all my new MTB family here in Michigan.

I was riding Maybury this morning, July 1st, the usual light crowd for a Sunday morning. I passed a couple of German speaking guys on my way in and watched them pass me as I stopped to adjust the seat on my new Kona creation. After saying hi to a large group just coming out ("watch out for the downed tree near the end") I set my stop watch and took off.

I passed the German dudes at about mile 1 and then at mile 2 I stopped to have a drink and catch my breath. They passed me again, as we passed good mornings and "beautiful day" observations between us.

I once more passed them on another climb and pretty much left them behind as I hit the fast section just before the split for the Winter loop.

As I got to that split off where the main takes a left and the Winter loop goes up hill I stopped again to get my heart rate down and have a drink. I noted a new rider coming down the Winter loop in the wrong direction and said good morning to him as he looked at the next section (heading towards the main loop in the correct direction) and said to himself "oh boy..." in a serious voice...

I didn't really think on it then but ever since this morning the details have rushed in to fill in the whole story. He was riding a decent entry level bike but his helmet was one of those bargain brand types, or so it appeared to me and I thought him to be a beginner like me or

maybe even newer to the sport. As I was ready to hit it when he arrived, I decided to allow him a two minute lead as I know the next short section before the last rock garden was going to be fast and fun.

After two minutes I took off and had a blast letting my new fully rigid Kona take the bumps as I flew down to the rock garden and took the easy route (fully rigid... remember?) around the rocks and there on the ground was the guy I just saw, still tangled up in his red bike.

I'll never forget his face and his voice, so small and meek a voice coming out of such a large man... "Please help me. It's serious. I can't feel anything..."

I got off my bike and noted his helmet was laying next to him. Completely crushed right down the middle, with a split in the remainder of the rear styrofoam, I knew he hit hard. I untangled his legs from the bike, shoved it out of the way and straightened out his torso with emphasis on his neck and head. As he was wearing a backpack, I used the mangled helmet as a prop to neutralize his neck until someone else could come along.

He told me his name but could not answer basic questions I was taught to use back in Tennessee when I was a Volunteer firefighter and medical first responder. I took my eyes off of him to get out my cell phone and dial 911. I lost them the first call but then my phone went into roaming and I locked on for what turned into a 17 minute call. As I was giving them the info one of the two German dudes rode up. "Juno". Pronounced like Juneau Alaska... Anyways, as I was answering a question to the 911 tech, I saw Matt go out. Just like a switch shutting off. His eyes were still open but I realized he wasn't breathing. Zero pulse and when I listened, no heart beat at all. His eyes dilated and fixed, then his body started primal breathing like I learned a long time ago where the brain still reads the high CO₂ levels and tells the diaphragm to move to inhale fresh air. I measured them for 15 seconds... 2 and a half breaths. Ok, 10 per minute. Ouch. Juno helped me unprop his head and do a body roll so we could get his pack off his back. I start chest compressions but did-

n't mess with his airway since getting the blood moving was more important at that point. The machine was breathing a little bit on its own. Do no more harm. Do no more harm. That kept repeating itself like a mantra in my head...

I did 4 sets of compressions and his heart started beating somewhere in those last sets. 40 bpm. I don't mean to get all factual but these memories are just flooding out of me and since I am not a diary keeper I gotta type it out somewhere. Might as well be here so we can all learn from it.

The human things, the life items that were happening are what I remember most. His fingers going from cold and blue to warm and red. His hands before the fingers going from yellow and cold to pink and warm again. Next thing I know Juno is telling me he is looking at me... I look into his eyes and he is responding to the voices. Great sign!

By now Chuck on a white Specialized pulls up and Juno's partner "Paolo" and our crash-friend is almost lucid again. We get his phone number out of him after a few attempts of scrambled numbers and Chuck calls his wife for him. The 911 tech tells me they are almost there... This is all in like.... minutes. Maybe even seconds...

The wait for the medics is long and excruciating for me. I keep thinking of the "golden hour" that I was taught for trauma victims to receive advanced care but our new friend actually helps lighten the mood with his kind voice and obviously big heart. As he becomes more lucid, he keeps asking us to touch various parts of his body so he can see if he feels anything. At each failed attempt he says "that's not good" but he is so upbeat and likable. I teased him a bit and really felt a loss when the real medics arrived and took over. Does that sound weird? I wanted to give him a hug and tell him all would be well.

The trip out the last mile of trail was an epic in itself with 7 or 8 riders and 6 medics all taking turns carrying the back-boarded fellow out. Man is he big. Must be 6 foot 6 and 250 pounds.

We used our bikes as pack mules for all

the medical gear and bags and finally made it out one hour and 17 minutes or so from the time I found him.

I still don't know what caused the crash. Maybe he hit that big rock where the easy and hard trails converge after the rock garden and did an endo. He must have been going fast the way that helmet was destroyed. I felt a sort of shock afterwards myself. Saying goodbye to all the great folks that helped. Watching the chopper lift off and what must have been Matt's wife leave in her minivan.

Driving home. Telling my wife about it. Working on my little boat. It all keeps coming back in a warm and weird way. I feel so small tonight. Like a tiny spark among millions of tiny sparks. I'm so glad we were all there together to help him out of there. Maybe it's best to ride with others? Or at least have a working cell phone with you when going solo? I thank the gods of fate that I learned the things I learned back in the 90's down in Tennessee. What a rush of panic it was! What a feeling of warmth tonight!

Mountain bikers are a special bunch. That's what I learned today for sure. I remember at least two of the guys actually giving me reassurances that I was doing fine when all was happening and I would look up at the faces of those around us. Paolo and others riding ahead to guide in the medics. Chucks kind look. The elite racer that flew in and then took off to help guide.

I could type all night not knowing how to wrap this up but I won't. I'll just end with a big thanks to my fellow riders and hope that our new friend will be all right.

Post Script:

Matt is paralyzed from the upper chest down but remarkable things are happening. He can flex his hand muscles and move his fingers a fractional amount. When he attempts to curl his toes they can feel the muscles slightly moving. These are miraculous signs for someone that crushed C3 through C5... Matt extended his thanks to me for all those that helped him that day and to all those who pray or meditate or just wish healing thoughts his way.

Want To Join The National Mountain Bike Patrol?

If you like:

- Riding your bike.
- Helping other people.
- Being involved in the management of your local trails.
- Learning and sharpening such skills as outdoor first aid, trailside bike repair, off-road riding, and communication.

Then IMBA's National Mountain Bike Patrol is for you!

IMBA/NMBP Individual Membership

There are three mandatory requirements for membership in the National Mountain Bike Patrol:

1. Current certification in basic first aid and CPR.
2. Successful completion of any of the following courses:

- A mountain bike patrol training course (taught by a local NMBP-affiliated group).
- A volunteer host training program (taught by local land manager).
- A ski area specific mountain bike patroller training (taught by a local ski area management or ski patrol).
- A passing grade on the NMBP online certification exam

IMBA/NMBP individual membership starts at \$50/year and includes IMBA membership and a patrol starter kit. Check out the full list of NMBP membership benefits. Please print out the NMBP Registration form. Complete and send to IMBA with payment, and a copy of your first aid/CPR certification.

What If There Isn't A NMBP Patrol Group In My Area?

Because many mountain bikers often ride alone, especially those who live and ride in sparsely populated areas, membership in a local patrol group is not a requirement for NMBP membership. However, NMBP members are strongly encouraged to join a local NMBP group if one exists, or consider starting one in their area. If not a member of a local patrol group, a patroller should still keep track of his or her volunteer hours. Registering as an official volunteer with local land management (as a Park Host, etc.) is a great way to promote the image of mountain bikers as responsible members of the trail community.



Chapter Chatter

Metro North Update

Stony Skills Park - We had what appeared to be a setback when the park told us that we weren't going to be able to build the skills park in the location that we had decided upon. During a park inventory, it was discovered that there were plant species in the area that needed to be preserved. The park offered us another area for the skills park, which ended up being better than the original location. ~ 5 acres of land, and elevation changes that the original location didn't have. Mike Moss, Tim Dunbar and Dan Durecki have worked together to lay out the locations of the stunts, and the pump track has been laid out. As of when this is being written, the work on the pump track is going to start within the week. As we begin to get into the construction of the stunts, we will be putting out a call for volunteer help to aid with the construction, so keep your eyes and ears open. We will be posting pictures of the progress on the Metro North website (<http://metronorth.mmba.org/>)

Steve Kinley and Chris Werth have stepped up to assist Paul Bailey as Trail Coordinators at Addison Oaks. Pauly has done an amazing amount of work at Addison, as anyone who has ridden out there can attest to. With more people involved to lighten the overall load, I'm sure we'll be seeing improvements to the trail as they all work together with the Oakland County Park management.

David Moore, who has been the TC at Orion Oaks, has agreed to also help out as TC at Bald Mountain. He has been working to improve the trail system at Orion Oaks over the last year, and investigating the possibility of new trails with the park management.

The next meeting will be again at the Rochester Mills Brewery on

October 16th at 6:30PM. We will be scheduling a meeting in late January soon, and will have the dates on the chapter website. Chapter meetings will also be posted on the MMBA forums. The chapter elections will take place at the January meeting.

Metro South

I would like to thank all of the members who could attend. Just remember for you to have a voice of what goes on in this chapter then you must show up and speak your mind, we welcome all voices. I would like to thank all the elected officials that work with me on making this a great chapter, thanks Frank, Claudia, Dave P & Dave C!!!!

MMBA Meeting 8/06/07

Ground Round 6:30

Attendance

James Altmann
Justin Applegate
Frank Bean
Claudia Bean
Cris Cataldo
Dave Cox
Matt Dughi
Joe Foy
Mike Flack
Bill Hermann
Ed Hug
Loren Konkus
Kevin Lubdtke
Jeff Oles
Kevin Petts
Andy Reyman
Scott Silvers
Andy Staub
Jessica Sterling

Approval of Minutes

General updates on trails, TC, trail days and activities

Hickory Glen/Commerce- TC open at beginning of meeting- Justin Applegate/ James Altmann. Signage needed, funds needed for signage, use 4 by 4 not carconite, use cross board in ground. 21 posts proposed, not all in at once, still

doing pricing, also do some maps throughout trail. Kiosk plans in progress, maybe SP08. Fall trail day planned. TC is officially filled at end of meeting- co-TC's St. James, Captain Justin. Congratulations, fellas! No tummysticks, now!

Highland- Bob Spleet- Andy Reyman was at the meeting on Bob's behalf. DNR is particular about signage, overgrowth being worked on, C as of 8/5 is NOT overgrown, a few prickers need to be cut, but all loops are rideable. Mileage markers can be checked and maps can be added. Map needs to be checked to be updated. Check with DNR if chapter buys signs can we put them in with mile markers.

Hines Park- Mike Flack- Mike got a hold of some people from Wayne County, gas lines are going in. Maybe we put in trails along gas lines so we do maintenance, consumers power line by Wilcox and Hines; there are some social hiking trails in that area already; a BMX track is being put in on Hines at by Gun Solley railroad tracks, heavy machinery is being used out there making it.

ILRA- John Burt- Sandy, switch back by road crossing, armoring 100 feet by first with cement mix, DNR not want whole reroute, trail day in fall. Bill has concrete, possible armoring,

Lakeshore Park/Novi- Dave Cox- Lots of volunteers helped with races, four races recently- Unicycle, TTF, Running Fit, and the X Tri. Need to watch out for bandit work, TC and assistant TC are in communication with some who do want to do some trail work so they can be productive and coordinate. City meeting with Matt and police- some lost children, so, mark maps with how to find trail head. Tri 3D in park- road tri, vendors, MMBA tent, 9/8 and 9, Tri 8, runs on the 9th. Relay- almost double teams from last year!

Maybury- Dave Poirer- Mike Flack is here on his behalf. Some accidents out there lately, proposal for signs every 1/2 mile, and park on how to get to loca-

tions, Northville Fire maps so they can get to locations to areas, letters versus mile markers, signs will be GPS'd.

Milford- Bill Herrman- Great shape, lots of riders, ridden in, fire dept. did a test run, went well, put mile markers to go in after another mile in. Milford challenge went well; O'Callagans was impressed, raised money for MMBA and Milford paved trail to be out in SP 08.

Munson- Scott Goocher- no report

Proud Lake- Bill Hermann- MTB kids event, DNR wanted it to go on, 10-4 8/7, Justin Tinker is MTB Kids guy, five volunteers, Trail is getting ridden in, fixing service road, mowed, looking at possible new trails over winter, please read the map. Connector from Proud Lake to Commerce great- wide open, not so much of an overgrowth issue.

Rouge Park- TC open- Sept. 15th trail day

Freeride Committee- BARF was a success, about 40 people; people tried things they normally wouldn't have. Requests for another one. Stony wants one in the future. Idea for winter excursion to Ray's.

Chapter events for summer/fall 2007-

Maybury Race- August 25th. Flyers out, insurance done, just getting volunteers and day of.

B4- Lakeshore Park, Mid October, possibly rotate from chapter to chapter

MTB 101 Clinic(trail Committee)- WCSX bike give away Sept. 15th Lakeshore Park, check how many web hits

Web Site- Metro South not used much.

FAFL Trail Hours

Commerce	no report
Highland	95
ILRA	6.5
Maybury	249.75
Milford	173
Munson	No report
Proud Lake	118
Rouge	96

Total 738.25

Financial Report- TBA

Balance of Funds and General Total-

MMBA South Metro Treasurer's report

2nd quarter 2007

1st quarter ending balance

\$7910.80

Expenses for 2nd quarter

\$758.38

Income for 2nd quarter

\$395.60

2nd quarter ending balance

\$7548.02

Other items-

New location for meeting proposed- Box Bar- Gus O'Connors...

Nominations- next meeting is nominations at beginning and voting that meeting at the end.

Serving on team- two year elections discussed

Next Meeting Nov. 5th. Secretary will contact locations)

Next next meeting- February 4th , 2008

Joe Foy (Hockeydaddy)
MetroSouth Chapter President

Mid-state Chapter News

The new chapter website is up and running. Currently, there isn't too much on it; however all of the information has been changed so that it is current. I would like to add a photo page so if you have some photos of yourself on local trails send them along and we will post them to the website. The website can be found by the chapter links on the MMBA home page or by accessing mid-state.mmba.org

I would like to thank Chris Mensing for revising the Burchfield trail map. The new map will be posted online soon (if it

hasn't been already) and we will also replace the current map at the Riverbend trailhead.

Trail construction is continuing at Bennett Park in Charlotte. We currently have about 7 miles of single track cut through the park. The first section is packing down nicely and the newer sections need people to ride them to help with the break in. Some signage has been posted. There is also a small issue with horses out there currently on the new trail, hopefully that will be resolved by the time you read this though. The trail has some fast flowing singletrack with short somewhat technical sections. I would definitely recommend giving it a shot if your in the area..

As a chapter we have had a pretty good showing at the CPS races this year. There has been some talk of purchasing a canopy for next year to put up on the team row. We will discuss this further at the chapter meeting, but from responses so far it looks like this will be a go. I am also going to look a developing a mid-state chapter team for next years race season. It will be open only to current mid-state chapter members and this will be more for fun than anything. Hopefully, we can get some support from one of our area shops.

A chapter meeting and elections were held on Sept. 10th at Bennett Park in Charlotte. At this time the meeting minutes are available on the chapter website, but I will have the results of the elections in the next BRB.

Recently, there has been some rogue building at Burchfield Park in Holt. Some new lines have been created without much reason and a few of the original stunts were modified. The chapter works hard to keep the trails maintained and to develop new stunts when the opportunity comes up. Please don't modify any of the existing structures without first communicating with the Trail Coordinator. All of the stunts have to be inspected monthly and paperwork is filled out for the parks department. We have an excellent working relationship with the park and in no way do we want to jeopardize it.

And as always any information regarding chapter events, group rides, trail maintenance, etc... can be found by visiting the Mid-state Message Board at www.onfa.com

Poto Chapter Update



Storm clean-up at Brighton Recreation Area

As this issue goes to press we are preparing for our Annual Triple Trail Challenge. This fundraising event provides most of the Poto Chapter's annual budget, so I would like to thank everyone that was able to join us and lend their support. We appreciate it!

We had an amazing storm come through Brighton Recreation Area in August that blew down an unbelievable

number of trees. The trail was effectively unrideable. In cooperation with The DNR staff, we mobilized a group of experienced MMBA volunteers and went to work. Chainsaws blazing, we were able to get the trail open again in record time. This is dangerous work

and using a chainsaw on public land typically requires certification and prior approval, but that day was an exception. Thank you

to everyone who helped and I am happy to report that aside from some saws that weren't working by the end of the day, we didn't have so much as a splinter to report.

A new trail is being created this fall south of Chelsea, MI. Sharon Hollow will be a great addition to our Chapter's lineup of trails and will be the first Washtenaw County Park that is promoting mountain biking as one of its primary uses. We will be holding a trail school in the early stages this fall, so keep an eye on the MMBA website calendar as we announce the date.

A key bridge will be installed at Hewens Creek in Ypsilanti this fall that will allow us to finally build the trails that will make the complete loop that will start and end at the parking lot. We should be announcing workday dates soon so keep an eye on the MMBA website

Western Chapter

On June 2nd we observed National Trail at the Cannonsburg Game Area. 350 volunteer hours later, we had accumulated two dump trucks worth of garbage from the 3 Mile parking lot, re-planted the sides of the creek with native plantings, re-routed erosion prone entrance, trimmed back the trail, fired up the yard boss to remove sand, and built a raised tread after rebuilding a bridge. Thanks to all that came out and pitched in to help. Look for another National Trail Day effort in 2008 on June 1st.

Later in July we relaxed with our 1st annual Ale and Trail. 30 riders joined in for a group ride put together by combining the Ski Area and CSGA. A few hardy souls took in additional mileage via the local dirt roads. And a few non-members just rode the dirt roads. A potluck was hosted at Casa Cramer after the rides. Just a great way to kick back after so much trail work earlier in the Spring. Late last Fall permission was secured with the management at the Ski Area for a Skills Area. Almost 500 volunteer hours later the Grand Opening for the Skills Area was held on August 18th. 45 people came out to watch, ride, and eat. Three successively difficult runs were open and all were in play. There are pictures on the western website and if you Google around more can be found.

15 westies met up at the Tippy Dam CG for over the weekend of August 25th, for a campout and group ride on the NCT. We toured the infamous Red Bridge section on a day that turned out perfect after a morning of doubtful weather. After 36 miles, a swim in the Manistee River was a perfect way to end. I thought it might be a quiet night around a campfire, but the usual fire-side pyrotechnics broke out.

Going into Fall- there are trail days planned at the Ski Area, CSGA, Yankee, and Hungerford. October 25th-28th we are hosting the IMBA Trail Care Crew of Jason,....., and Moxie. Look for upcoming announcements for the events.



SPEAK



BUILD



RESPECT



RIDE

BARF at the Farm

Becoming A Rad Freerider

By Matt Dughi

In the last few seasons of mountain biking I've seen a good amount of progression and interest in freeride. Michigan in general is a flat state and because of this we naturally lack the gravity side of mountain biking. But there is no reason other than the permission from land managers to not have freeride in our area. You can freeride in Michigan and if you know where to look we do have some really good spots.

A few years ago I used to think Bloomer and Burchfield were the only places to freeride. I soon saw places like Maybury that put in some really good rock gardens and drop/jump features. I saw Stony Creek put in log piles and a nice jump. I can't wait to see the stunts and pumptrack that Stony Creek has planned to build. Lakeshore park has built many features including a pumptrack. It feels like every time I go back to Lakeshore park I see something new to ride. Seeing all this being built is the progression and interest in freeride I'm talking about. It's great. And I keep hearing about other trails in our area building fun stuff to ride.

Thinking of a way to build more interest in freeride with cross country riders and beginners I thought I would organize a freeride day. We set a date and posted the idea on a few message boards. Next thing I know "BARF at the Farm" was born—Becoming A Rad Freerider. We held the clinic at Lakeshore park in Novi on June 10.

I was a little surprised to see the number of people show up to learn a thing or two about freeride. And I was even more surprised to see how fast people started to learn and try things that they thought might be too advanced or technical. I couldn't teach anything too crazy like gap jumps or technical drops. But



Matt Dughi shows how it's done

we were able to teach some really good fundamentals of the sport. I had a lot of great help that day and I credit that for how well this clinic ran. By the end of the day I found myself riding and having as much fun as everybody else. It was a big day of sessioning all the features

Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

Lakeshore Park has built.

I plan to have more BARF clinics. Keep an eye on the message boards for the next date.

5th Annual Bulletin Board Biker Bash

by Joe Foy



Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media
Cris Santos performs at last year's BBBBB

Well here we go again, It amazes me how time flies and we find ourselves at the end of another biking season. We are proud to announce the 5th Annual Bulletin Board Biker Bash (B4), it will be held at Novi's Lakeshore Park (Novi Tree Farm).

The date is being planned for Saturday, Oct 13th, 2007. Again it will be a day filled with clinics of all sort. There will be a wide variety of fun events as always such as The Sled Pull, The Blind Race, The Huffy Toss. Let's not forget the "Chili Cook Off". Plus this year we are going to add a huge new twist and announce the Punch clock Rally.

All of this is in its final stages of planning and you will want to watch the MMBA Board for all info on this upcoming event. So come on out and meet all the people you see on the bulletin board and put a face to the names. It's always a full on "HOOT" and this year will be no different. See ya there!!!!



Photos by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

Tree Farm Relay Race

By Dave Cox

The Tree Farm Relay was held on Sunday, July 15 at Lakeshore Park in Novi, MI. The race was presented by Team Tree Farm and Dark Horse Racing and a donation will be made to the MMBA to help make improvements at the park. As with the 2006 race, this was a

unique four person team relay format that allowed teammates to run laps around the park and have their cumulative time determine how they finished. The relay was a grassroots, simple format that featured six classes: men's, women's and co-ed in both advanced and sport categories. 37 teams signed up, which was almost twice as many as the 2006 race!

Congratulations to the winners: Kona Midwest (Advanced Co-ed), MTB-Life/Soul Cycles (Advanced Men), Team America (Sport Co-ed), Macomb Bike & Fitness (Sport Men) and Dark Horse Racing (Sport Women).

This was a perfect race for beginners to get a taste of what racing is like, and for advanced riders to have fun and challenge themselves. It began with a Lemans start with the first wave of racers running and stumbling down the sled hill to grab their bikes and hit the trail. The transition area was a flurry of activity all day long with riders exchanging Hawaiian leis between laps.

The Timing Guys had their work cut out for them, but did a great job of keeping things organized. The racers were please-



Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media
Racers exchanging leis

antly surprised with a race course that added some super fast double track, and even some climbs, to the normal Lakeshore Park trail!

All in all, this was a different, exciting and fun race that will let racers give something back to the trail. The 2008 race should take place in mid-to-late July of 2008, and should be even better!



Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media
The race begins with a Lemans start

Three Guys

Part II

Mesick to Boyne

By Jeff Adamcik

After a early breakfast from a local eatery in Mesick, we headed north on 37 to the M-37 trail head. I was a little unsure about today for I had not pre rode many of the sections for this leg of the journey. The later part of this first section follows the Manistee River and has some nice views (highbanks Rollway) overlooking the river and good singletrack. It is, however, also easy to lose the trail in the first part, which we did numerous times. Try parking at the Baxter Bridge and riding the trail west...it's definitely worth checking out.

The next section up to Old US 131 State Forest Campground is a decent ride and is used by bikers. Once the trail turns north, you hit some sections where you wish something like motorcycles would come thru and work the trail in. The next section you run in to has some sandy areas and you think otherwise. The trail eventually starts to head east towards Kalkaska passing through Munice Lakes and Sand Lakes Quiet Area. The plan was to make Kalkaska for a



late lunch, but after getting

sidetracked again, we didn't get there until after 6:00 p.m. I definitely under estimated the riding time for day two (and getting lost a few times didn't help matters).

After a quick bite to eat it started to rain, so with the weather and narrow timeframe we decided to head up 66 and bypass the trail east (even though there is a fun 8 mile section from Sun-

set Trail Rd to Starvation Lake). The rain was coming down pretty hard and we made a good decision to bail in Mancelona around 8:00 p.m. that night with a hard fought 96 miles for the day. After giving day two more thought, it would have been better to break this section into two days. Next time, I would ride Mesick to Kalkaska then Kalkaska to Petoskey.

Read part one in the Summer Bent Rim Bugle

Contest Winner

Hey Guys,
I want to offer a little news item for the
BRB.

Jim "Crash" Crissman, the Midland City Forest trail coordinator, has won the 2007 Dirt Rag Literature Contest. The winning short story, "Wallhangers," will appear in the October 2007 issue (number 131), which will be available as a conventional magazine or digitally, through the magazine's website, www.dirragmag.com. First prize is a Gary Fisher HiFi trail bike, which you can glimpse flashing through the woods as soon as it arrives and Jim heals up from the results of his latest bloody endo.

Swollen with trauma and pride,
Jim

Wayne County's Lightfest 8K Fun- Run/Walk and Bike Through the Lights

By Joe Foy

I would like to announce that the Metro South Chapter and Detroit's "Beat the Train" Andy Staub) are going to work in conjunction with Wayne County Parks in their upcoming Wayne County LightFest. A couple days before the official opening to the general public they will have a Run/Walk event to highlight it.

For the last couple of years I have sent letters asking them to include bikes on this and last year we almost had it happen but we couldn't iron out all the logistics. But this year I'm happy to say they have opened it to bike for this event. So go to their website "<http://www.waynecounty.com/parks>" and

register, bundle up, dress up your bike and join us in all the fun. Again check the MMBA Board for all the details.

LIGHTFEST 8K FUN RUN/WALK AND BIKE THROUGH THE LIGHTS

Tuesday, November 13
7:00 pm at Hines Park – Merriman Hollow Area, Westland

Enjoy a breathtaking run/walk through Midwest's longest drive through holiday light display. Due to popular demand, Wayne County Parks is now offering bike riders a chance to bike through the lights before it opens to the public. Call the park office for registration fees and information.

La Ruta De Los Conquistadores or How to Spend Your Honeymoon in Costa Rica—Part Two

By Jochen Faber

I was done. I was walking at a snails pace, one foot in front of the other, until Diane had caught up with me. She was still in good spirits, despite the knowledge that the 3rd checkpoint was gone and our race day was over.



A fellow racer sat on a huge mossy rock on the bottom of the next super climb under a tree and I decided to join him. The moss felt so cool and refreshing, I must have sat there for 30 minutes or so, totally loosing track of time.

Diane came looking for me and together we finally advanced to the 3rd checkpoint in a small village. We had climbed some 7,500 feet. Many other racers were already there waiting for busses, many of them came in after us. After I recovered a little I came to the realization that I was on my honeymoon and on vacation in a tropical paradise and suddenly all was better. What a day.

The transport to the finish line was rather chaotic, the organizers were totally overwhelmed with the 250 riders that did not make their checkpoints in time and had to be shuttled to the finish. That is a 50% drop-out rate, there were many riders who didn't even make the 1st checkpoint. Of course we were on the bus from hell, where a fellow rider turned his stomach inside out

Read part one in the Summer Bent Rim Bugle

several times, we were lucky to sit in the front, so we were spared the visuals...

We arrived at the finish line, showered in the make-shift tent showers with ice-cold

water next to piles of horseshit (the finish was on a huge horse farm), got our massage, had our post race dinner and were shuttled back to Hotel Irazu in San Jose for the night. The bikes were supposed to meet us the next day at the start. We slept well that night.

Day 2 was the climb of the volcano Irazu. 9,000 feet of climbing, 41.5 miles. Breakfast was at 4am, the busses left at 5am to the start line, which was on the outskirts of San Jose at the Terramall shopping center. We found our bikes, powerwashed clean, and got ready for another day in the saddle. Warming up I almost crashed into Tinker, the same had happened many years prior when Tinker was warming up for an Iceman in Kalkaska. Funny coincidence.

There were noticeably less people at the start than the day before. We started out through the parking lot of the mall, then rolled though an underground parking garage into the street, some 500 years later we made a left turn and immediately

started a 22 mile climb with very little interruption. The first miles were on pavement, some sections were super steep, riders swerving all over the road, hundreds of bystanders clapping and cheering you on, all kind of local riders on road and mountain bikes flowing up the hill with us. It was a great atmosphere, everybody tried to hold on and ride. The road turned into a steep slippery tunnel type alley they had dug out of the mountain, then we crossed some open fields (still climbing), followed by a fun and fast downhill. And the climbing continued, the steep sections always attracted the locals, cheering and applauding., another dirt road climb back to the blacktop and finally to the first checkpoint. The temperatures were much cooler then the day before, the sky was overcast, perfect for climbing.

From here you followed the road to the top, one long climb, at least it was all on blacktop, so you could concentrate on your spin instead of focusing on the trail. This is an interesting time to reflect on what you are doing. You just pedal away, relentlessly, and your mind goes haywire. You think for example about how your buddies are racing the Iceman right at that very moment, how they are crawling up the last climbs of the Vasa trail, probably complaining about the steep hills. "The Iceman hills" you think, "what a wussy trail in comparison". "What do they know about hills, we are climbing volcanoes here."

The cutoff for the 2nd checkpoint was 1pm, we made good time on the climb and were there way before noon. The checkpoint stops become a routine after a while and you get much more efficient at restocking and replenishing supplies. An almost 20 mile downhill lies ahead. Wow, where can you ride downhill for 20 miles.

Well, 100 yards after leaving the checkpoint you realize that not all downhills are created equal. This one started out particularly gnarly, huge boulders, red volcanic clay, obstacles as far as the eye can see. It reminded me at the downhill sections of the 24-hour races at Canaan and Snowshoe. It took some serious navigational abilities to make it through this stuff with-

out endoing or seriously hurting yourself or your machine. As I was riding my trusted 8-year old Bianchi Ti Megatube hardtail with a whopping 80mm Englund-rodded Judy fork it was not all fun and games. There were plenty of superslippery rock sections where small rivers coming out of the mountain had washed away any possible gripping surface, there were fields of softball size boulders to plow through, sometimes the ground was soft and squishy and you felt like riding through a giant cow dung paddy (maybe it was one, there were cows everywhere).

My brakes were smoking hot and started to loose grip a bit. Sometimes I just had to stop to stretch my back, to give my wrists a rest, to stop the vibration. The vegetation was totally different here, the top of Irazu sported a cloud forest, now I was again in a more rainforesty environment (like I am the expert all of a sudden). I see the valley bottom in the far distance, behind me the volcano enshrouded in a cloud. I ride past small ranches, some with horses, some with cattle, always peering a few feet ahead of my front wheel to find the best line. And down it goes, whoopee, it seems like a bottomless pit. The lower you get, the more habitation you see, the more tractors, trucks and horses you encounter on the crazy and wild road. This always adds to the excitement, you barrel around the next corner trying to keep the rubber side down and in the last second you realize that you are about to become the hood emblem of a tractor coming uphill taking over the entire road. I remember my heart jumping more then once due to some close encounters. But you gotta press on. I virtually blew through the 3rd checkpoint somewhere after a huge mudhole and continued my ride into the abyss. For some strange reason there is a 400 yard blacktop section in the middle of all the messy boulders, you finally gain some speed just to realize in the last moment that this was just a dangerous teaser trying to cause a tire blow-out.

After a short real blacktop section through a larger village the final 3 miles of gravel downhill brought me through the finish line. Wow, I surprised myself, after yesterdays total bonk to find the energy again to finish this stage. Diane arrived some 15 minutes later, we both had a few close calls, but nobody drew any blood. Other riders did

not fare that well, there were plenty of injuries that day, some of them quite serious.

After spending 8 hours in the saddle that day, we showered in cold water again, enjoyed our well deserved massage, and wolfed down our post race dinner. The shuttle bus brought us to our hotel for the night, Hotel Geliwa, a real rat-hole. Not quite as the advertised 3 or 4 star accommodations. But for future reference we decided to give this hotel our desireful 3-rat rating.

We did not sleep well, our bodies were aching, the killer sunburn from the first day was glooming red despite several applications of a 55 sweat proof sunblock lotion that day, I accidentally dumped my entire 100 ounce water bladder on the hotel floor before breakfast and the whole day didn't seem to get off to a good start. Breakfast was at 4am again, more beans and rice, bus shuttle at 5am, the start was at the same spot we had finished yesterday. After retrieving my bike I noticed the left fork leg was not holding any air, I remembered bottoming it out a few times during yesterday's torture downhill. Luckily one of the techs had the right tool and was able to tighten the valve stem of the air inlet.

So day 3 had another 5,700 feet of climbing in store for us, and a nice long 75 miles. Diane was totally discouraged by the distance and did not want to start. "I can't do it anymore", "I want to take the bus". I convinced her that we should at least attempt the first checkpoint and promised her that we would ride this final day together. The starting lineup seemed shorter then yesterday again. I guess riders were dropping out.

The day started out with the same 3 mile stretch we came flying downhill yesterday from the last village, except now it was a 3 mile climb. There is nothing more exhilarating than starting your day with a solid 3 mile climb directly out of the gate up a dirt road at 6:15am on a Sunday in the middle of a banana plantation. Somehow it wakes you up, you don't feel quite right, but you know you are awake.

After the 3 mile climb there is a fun section of blacktop through some villages, then you hit the gravel again. Gnarly downs, gnarly ups, gnarly downs, gnarly ups. The

only flat pieces of land in Costa Rica seem to be the soccer fields in the villages.

The sun is out, relentlessly beating on you again, and you feel tired. Every new hill presents a new challenge to overcome. There are occasionally smooth sections winding through different villages, sometimes you catch a piece of blacktop, and you cross a lot of bridges. The first checkpoint is on a 6 mile downhill, all loose gravel of course, with some pretty scary elevation drops. By now we are really awake and decide to continue, what da hell, we came here to ride. The next checkpoint marks the end of the very last climb, only 17 miles away.

So we cruise on, through many small villages, approaching the last final 3.5 mile climb. Every time the trail turns upwards you think this is it, but around the corner is the next downhill. The trail does not seem to end and the 17 miles are dragging on, finally you see the climb lingering on the horizon.

With fresh legs and a fresh spirit this climb would just be another climb, steep but absolutely rideable. But your legs after 20,000 feet of climbing in the last 3 days with very little recovery feel a little out-of-it. You can feel every bone in your body, including your butt bone, rebelling against your effort to make it up this final stretch. Diane was seriously faltering and I was not feeling much better. We started walking from 1 little spot in the shade to the next, slowly covering ground. The rider on the quad yelled "3 more kilometers to the top". Seems doable, but when you see the same guy again 15 minutes later and he cheers you on yelling "3 more kilometers" you start to loose faith.

We realized that we still had some power left in our legs, it was the Caribbean sun that was presenting the biggest challenge. Despite all efforts with different sun blocks we were being fried. The hill starts to level out a bit towards the top and even 3 Costa Rica kilometers finally come to an end and checkpoint 2 was in sight. We made the timecheck, no issue.

When we arrived there were several riders down for the count. And we thought we were done as well. We could take no more sun. Ahead was the last big downhill, all

blacktop, quite famous at La Ruta, the well deserved descent in the Pacific coast valley. But the downhill was short in comparison to the remaining 40 miles of infamous railroad sections and the next checkpoint was 22 miles out. We enjoyed a cool Coke from a small store across the way, sat down and relaxed, waiting for the bus. I felt bad sitting there, I felt I had enough energy to continue at least to the next checkpoint, this is the race I was dreaming of for many years and I was sitting there on top of the last hill sipping a Coke in a lawn chair, ready to throw in the towel.

Deana and James, a couple we had ridden with throughout the day arrived at the checkpoint. They were determined to press on, refueled and disappeared on the horizon. Some 10 minutes later enough clouds moved in to block the sun, the valley ahead looked overcast, so I rallied the troops to keep moving. I was not going to end my race on this mountain. We geared up again and Diane, myself, Patrick and Dan left the checkpoint together. Another mile of gravel rolling hills and we hit the pavement.

This road was build by the banana plantation companies to get their trucks all the way into the jungle. It is completely smooth, straight and some 7 miles or so long. And you can bomb down, whatever speed your bike is able to achieve, no brakes, just pure rush. Somewhere you fly through some villages, and you go down down down... awesome.

It seems like a well deserved bonbon after all the gravel, mud and dirt. And suddenly the rush is over and you hit the first railroad sections. Picture this, an abandoned narrower railroad, where the railroad ties are filled in with loose gravel, or are just

grown over, or are fully exposed to add to the excitement. This track is cutting directly through the jungle or banana plantations and you have to ride on it for many miles, as in most cases there is no trail to the side of it, just jungle. There are of course villages where you get off and ride on the adjacent dirt roads, there is even a short high traffic road section where a paceline was a great help.

We ended up catching Deana and James, and we all needed each others motivation to continue on. The most challenging parts were the railroad bridges, some of them probably a half mile long. You had to walk you bike across, balancing on worn-out wooden railroad ties, with many of them missing, broken off or loose, always seconds away from falling into the abyss below. As Diane is afraid of heights, it took a lot of encouragement to get her across these bridges. Sometime I had to take her bike so she could fully concentrate on where she was stepping. We made it to the 3rd checkpoint in time.

It took some convincing to keep moving, we had another 15 miles of railroad to the 4th checkpoint, then another 10 miles along the beach to the finish. "We didn't get this far just to give up now" I said. "Let's go, let's finish this". So 5 of us trucked on, switching between the railroad and adjacent dirt roads. Some sections were really difficult, and on a hardtail it just beat the shit out of you. Diane rode her new Moots YBB SL I had just built for her a few month earlier, a sweet bike and much more suited for this kind of stuff. Light enough to climb and enough suspension in the rear to take the edge off.

She was styling now, even though she had almost given up. We caught up with 4 Mexi-

can riders and several bridge challenges later we finally saw the ocean on our left. We had actually crossed Costa Rica, who would have thought. Roman greeted us at the 4th checkpoint, "you are true conquistadores, you did it, only 10 miles to finish". We loaded up one last time, pounded one more last energy gel, and were on our way to the finish. The last 10 miles were on relatively flat and smooth sandy terrain along the coastline, between hundreds of palm trees. The 5 of us stayed together. We rode into Playa Bonita, along the harbor, as it was getting dark. The finish was on the beach, it was amazing. We made all the checkpoints in time and finally arrived, after 10.5 hours in the saddle.

The beach party was in full swing and I had to jump into the water, I had thought about this all day. The water was super warm and the massive waves swept you off your feet. They catered excellent food, there was music, and hundreds of stories. What an amazing finish, what an amazing race. Who would have thought that 2 Michigan flatlanders could actually make it this far at La Ruta. We started and we finished, even though we had a few doubts and issues along the way, we did it. We did not crash, we had no mechanicals on the trails and no flats. I am so proud of my wife Diane, that she toughed it out against all odds. She is a great rider.

The evening ended with a long bus ride back to the Hotel Irazu in San Jose, across the continental divide, past the jungles and volcanoes we had just conquered. It was dark but the scenery was still very much in front of our eyes.

What a crazy start of a honeymoon...

Full Enchilada

By TJ Hill, bicycle aficionado

This ride is considered the Full Enchilada plus 6 additional miles of West Branch trail that rounded up the ride from 56 to 63 miles. Overall I did 22 miles of West Branch Trails during the 63 miles of riding.

The next trail section was in Bear Creek about 2 miles or so over a variety of

surfaces including pebbles, grass, wood chip and dirt single track. Next on the route are the significant dirt hills on Gallagher, Silver Bell and Dutton. We then have a long stretch of paved bike path along Dutton until we reach Squirrel at which point we have a paved ascent up to Bald Mountain Road.

We then turn left and descend Heilbrun Hill where Rick reached 43.3 mph. Bill and I only reached 40.4 on that de-

scent. We then did the trails of Hawk Woods that cover about 3 miles. We return to Bald Mountain Road then climb Heilbrun Hill at about 7mph. We cross Dutton then descend the loose gravel Bald Mtn Hill. We cross Silver Bell descent to Hi Hill then go left on Kosuth to the cul de sac then enter Bald Mtn Trout Lake that has paved roads until we reach the dirt tangent trail.

After crossing Greenshield we enter the trails of Bald Mountain South. We did the full set of trails as far as the turn for Apple Hill where Bill went south to return home for Fathers Day doings. Rick and I went on to Apple Hill where for the first time in seemingly years I cleared Apple Hill. My problem with this hill is my need to stand to get in the proper amount of power. Usually when I stand my rear wheel slips and then if it slips a second time I come out of my pedals. Today the surface was right so

that when I stood my wheel didn't slip and thus I made it past the two significant roots near the top. Apple Trail was more like Raspberry trail as we were both cut up liberally on arms legs and face before we exited.

We went to CJ's for brunch then headed for Bald Mtn North. We did the regular loop but not the super loop. We went to Tom's house to go swimming. I picked up my leaders jersey that Mike Samyn had delivered to Tom from Nino. After

swimming I had a beer. "Una Cervesa pour favor." We then returned to Stony West Branch via Sheldon and the trails. We came in with 56 miles. After Rick left I went out to round up the calories to a numeral above 4000. The extra 6 miles gave me 4481 calories burned in 63 Miles. During the ride we ascended 7972 feet.

Till next time, happy days and exhilarating trails.

(Continued from page 8)

our leisurely lunch over we returned to our bikes and then returned to Caley where we went west to Baldwin. Caley has tough hills in both directions. We headed north on Baldwin to Sutton then east to Clark then north to Hunters Creek then east to Wilder then south to Sutton then east. At this point I have to begin searching my internal navigational system to get in the needed mileage.

The next destination was going to be Almont. We followed Sutton to Lake George then went south to Hollow Corners then east to Bishop then south to Tubspring. We went east, crossed Van Dyke then turned south on Howland then went south to the Almont Bakery. We went in but they didn't have anything that suited me from the day old rack. We crossed the street to the gas station party store where I got a 22 ounce cup of Raspberry iced tea. I opened up a power bar and took a couple of bites.

At this point our mileage was 85. It is 21 miles back to Stony via the standard route. Since that was 19 miles short of the required distance we wouldn't be using the standard route. We headed west on St. Clair/General Squires to Shoemaker then south to Hough. We would follow Hough to its west end at Hosner. At that point we would stair step south and west to Davison Lake and Delano.

From that corner it is 21 miles back to Stony. That was not enough so we went north on Delano to Rock Valley then west to Barber, south to Davison Lake

then east back to Delano. We seemed to be close to our required mileage. As we passed Winn-A-Gin we crossed the 100 mile mark. We followed Delano south to Ray then went east to Hosner. About that time I began calculating the mileage to Tom Asmus's home. I came up with 112.5 that would put us right on the mark for a 125 mile return.

We continued east on Ray to Hosner then went south. We crossed Lakeville Road then began the three hills of Hosner that lead to the St. Benedict Monastery. We went right on Drahner, continued the climb up to 1225 feet then began the six curve descent down to Barr Road. We then faced the three hills of Barr that are fortunately easier than the three hills of Hosner. We turned right onto Indian Lake and climbed up to Ridge then descended to Camilla over a bumpy downhill 90 degree turn. At Conklin we went left for a bit to Bunny Run then left, east to Miller where we begin the five hills of Miller.

At Harmon we descend around a left curve then swoosh off toward the Bald Mountain Trail crossing. At Predmore we head east, cross Lake George then reach the south dogleg. At the east dogleg we continue south across Turtle Creek Lane and the half mile to Tom Asmus's home. Neither Tom nor Mary were home so we went down to the boat, removed our shoes, socks and jerseys in preparation for a cooling swim. I retrieved a Styrofoam kick board so I actually didn't have to swim. I waked down the stairs and pushed off into the lake without hesitation. I paddled out a short distance then switched to my back so most of my body was

immersed in water. I made certain my nose didn't go under the water as that causes my to have a runny nose and eyes for three days.

Our water time was likely no more than 10 minutes. It was refreshing as we redressed then returned to our bikes and to head off for the final 12.5 miles back to Stony. We headed east on Predmore to Rush then south to Parks, east to Dequindre, south to Inwood, west to Hixon, south to Buell, west to Hadden, south to Gunn, west to Sheldon. I checked my odometer and figured I was a mile or so short. I needed to get to the hole in the fence with 123.7 miles. We did a loop in the sub north of Snell then the one south of Snell then up the driveway of Hugger Elementary.

At the hole in the fence we had 123.8 miles. It is 1.3 miles from this spot to Lot B and so soon we had covered the final mile of this year's Summer Solstice Sortie. It was 8:27 PM when we returned though our riding time had been 10 hours 47 minutes. We averaged 11.59 mph. Our total ascent for the ride was 8452 feet. Calories burned for me was 6829. Phil's calorie burn was 5711, must be something about our age differential. I guess I get the Senior Citizen bonus when it comes to calories burned. The great thing about it was that neither of us was really dead thanks to the moderate temperature.

Till next time, happy days and exhilarating trails.

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